

BITS & PIECES**QUIKDATA/H-SCOOP NEWS****NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

As you may have noticed from our new catalog, H-SCOOP is now \$28/year for US First Class mail, \$32 First Class for Canada, and \$42 for foreign AIR MAIL subscriptions. This was an increase that was long overdue, and is being done now in anticipation of the postal rate increases to go in effect early next year. We have had several postal increases and much higher printer and labor costs since our last price increase which was a very long time ago.

We will make a special offer. If you are about to have your subscription expire (look at the number on your mailing label and compare it to this issue number which is #126 and you'll see how many issues you have left) or simply want to save the extra increase, send in the old rates yet anytime this month and we will extend your sub an additional year or whatever you specify at the old rates. These were \$24 US, \$28 Canada, and \$36 foreign.

NEW CATALOG POLICY

In other news, all our catalogs are finally out. It's been a very busy month, putting off working on this newsletter until the last minute, which I don't like. We have made a decision that there will be no more mass mailings of our catalog. We decided to come out with a new catalog more frequently, but will not be sending it to our entire database. We will be sending them to H-SCOOP subscribers, placing them in boxes of orders being shipped out, and giving them out to advertising responses. This will dramatically cut our costs of producing and mailing the catalog, and I figure this way, those who order from us will continue to get current catalogs, those who do not, do not need them anyway!

As it stands, we purge our database before catalog time deleting customers that have not had activity for a certain amount of time. We usually eliminate about 500 this way. We try to keep our database as accurate as possible, but get several hundred back every year as "undeliverable" just the same. That is expensive and nonproductive. We will be purging our database more often from now on and making our inactivity time shorter. This way we hope to keep a more up-to-date database. Unless you're in the mail order business, you simply would not believe how often people move!

CATALOG UPDATES - ALREADY!

Now about the catalog and updates already! Please make these additions and changes in your catalog to keep it half current anyway.

Our **QD386SX** has a Norton of 17 and Landmark of 20. We have also introduced a **bare SX system** like our others, only like the 40MB QD386SX this also uses the baby AT cabinet. **Bare bones system will sell for \$695** (page 3)

Page 4, we have added the **TurbosPort 386 internal lithium 3V CMOS battery module for \$15.95**. Any day now, we should have the **lithium cells for the MinisPort** computers. Note that the **ZA180-45** NICAD battery is for the **ZWL183-92 and ZWL183-93**.

Same page, delete the reference to the **FAX MODEM BOARD** option for the **DSTAR** laptop modem. Folks at Quay said the technology has not increased as fast as they have hoped and the response has not been there to warrant the FAX upgrade. It may come in the future.

Same page, note that the **CABL-18F** for laptop floppy connections will also work for the MinisPort to attach an external 5" drive to it. We also have some **HCA-77** cables for \$35 which will also work for the MinisPort to floppy connection, but this was the Zenith cable for their floppy box, and terminates in a D37 connector instead of the 34 pin card edge connector of the **CABL-18F**.

Under Z200/AT SERIES on page 6, the **EVEREX RAM 8000 AT** board will handle Base, extended and expanded and they can coexist. LIM EMS 4.0 is supported. The card has some problems in some Zenith systems, but if you need 8megs of RAM, it may be worth a try. Everex will try to help if you can't get it going properly. They have some faster chips they will install at no charge if that's what the problem is. Your Zenith Z248 5 and 8Mhz systems should have a recent BIOS ROM revision. It probably will not work in the very old Z241 systems and possibly early Z248 systems as they were not very PC hardware compatible.

Added to page 6 under same section is a **PARALLEL PORT PRINTER CARD** which can be addressed as LPT1:, LPT2: or LPT3: for \$39. Order code is **ATPAR**.

Same page, under Z386 PRODUCT SPECIFIC, we have just added the **I/O Bus Pal 444-536 for \$9 for the Zenith 386/16 computer**.

On page 7, by the SOTA section, note that we have the **16i memory upgrade** for the accelerator boards. the bare 0K board **MEM16I** is \$259, and the **2 meg** populated board **MEM16I2** is \$459

Page 8, note that the **BOCARAM** board has a 5 year warranty.

On bottom of page 8, top of page 9, scratch the **FASTCARDS**, as PMI has once again disappeared, apparently out of business this time. We do have one **FASTCARD3** and a **Fastcard IV daughterboard** left in stock.

On page 16 delete the reference to **SPELL-H**, as we do not have the master for this.

Add to page 17 we have just added the **Megamate 2.8** from Microsolutions. It is complete with 2.8 meg floppy, Compaticard IV, cabinet and cable. Requires a slot and draws power from the computer. This can be added to any PC/XT/AT computer to give you a 2.8 meg drive. Will still read and write the 720K and 1.4 meg formats. Order **MMATE28** for \$329.

Price changes on page 18, the **ST-125** hard drive is now \$219, the bare **ST-251-1** is now \$309, and at the bottom the complete 40 meg kit with controller and cable and ST-251-1 drive, **PCW40** has been reduced to \$349.

Correction to page 19 under FLOPPY DRIVE CABLES, the **CABL-S5** should read 5' not 5".

Page 20, the **ED35** 2.8 meg disks are being sold individually because of their cost, and they have come down to \$7.40 each.

Page 22, the coprocessors **80287-10** and **80287-12** have the prices interchanged. The -10 is \$195 and the -12 is \$249.

Page 25, delete the Paradise **AutoSwitch 480** as it has been discontinued.

This all goes under the very frustrating department of "things you wish you knew 2 months ago before you sent the catalog masters to the printer!" Goes to show you, this is a very rapidly changing industry.

GOODBY MRS. HUG!

I read the August REMark magazine and was very saddened when I came across the note they had put in that Margaret Bacon, Secretary of HUG had retired.

I don't know how to describe Margaret, but she was some woman. I have never seen such a human dynamo of a woman in my days. I met Margaret at the first Heath User's Group in the Chicago area in 1982, and have had the pleasure of meeting her several times afterwards and talking to her on the phone at HUG once in a while. And a pleasure it was indeed. She is a very dynamic energetic person. Always cheerful. Extremely knowledgeable.

I recall seeing her running to and fro at the conventions keeping everything organized, answering questions, helping folks out - going constantly like an unlimited source of power.

Margaret was a very strong force for the Heath User Group and I am very saddened to learn that she has retired, not that she does not deserve it, I just can't imagine HUG without Margaret.

Well I'm sure HUG will survive, but the place just won't quite be the same anymore. Margaret, I miss you. You did a fantastic job, and are the kind of worker every boss can only dream of having.

BULL OFF TO A GOOD START?

FRENCH THEFT OF TECHNOLOGY REPORTED Paris (IHT) -- U.S. authorities have caught French government intelligence agents stealing computer technology for the benefit of Compagnie des Machines Bull, a state-owned French electronics concern, according to a report in L'Express, a news magazine due to go on sale Friday.

Citing unidentified sources in both countries, the report said France's foreign intelligence agency had infiltrated spies into International Business Machines, Texas Instruments and other U.S. companies in order to obtain trade secrets that could improve the competitive position of Bull, which has suffered mounting losses in recent years.

The operation, uncovered late last year, poisoned relations between the Central Intelligence Agency and its French counterpart to the point where the two agencies have stopped swapping sensitive information on industrial and economic subjects, the magazine said. Article appeared in the International Herald Tribune, Thursday, May 17, 1990

Hmmm, very interesting, but not so good! Wonder what that's going to do for future government contracts!

OLDER ZDS PC'S NOT PC COMPATIBLE?

We have been having a good deal of problems lately trying to upgrade memory in some of the older ZDS computers, both the 8-bit and 16-bit bus models. Several cases involved the Z241 and Z248 and Everex memory cards, notably the RAM 8000 and RAM 10000. We got involved in a lengthy discussion with the top tech support at Everex about this and were kind of surprised by what we learned.

I was told that although the early Zenith computers were pretty much software PC compatible, they were not at all hardware compatible [and one of the Zenith engineers recently told me that the H/Z151 was the most PC compatible machine ever produced!]. If you've followed this newsletter for any amount of time, or tried third party boards in your Zenith computers, especially the earlier ones (1987 and below vintage), you'll realize what I am talking about. Many third party cards do not work in ZDS computers period. I was told ZDS used lots of strange circuitry and did not follow the IBM specs for PC compatibility on the hardware level, although as time went on, they got better. The reason they got better is because of all of this compatibility and the problems with third party cards. They took advice of customers and the third party vendors and improved their systems.

The tech at Everex I spoke to told me flat out, that some of the ZDS PC/AT computers were entirely different machines from the start of production to the end of the product line. Thus where a product may work on a "older" Z248, the product may absolutely refuse to run on an "early model" Z248, and that's been a very major problem of third party vendors. Since models changed so rapidly, it's hard to say which computers in a family product line will work and will not work with. Very confusing to say the least.

We spoke of the Z248 and the Everex RAM 8000 card. He said the machine was very incompatible hardware speaking to a PC/AT computer, but one thing superior was the faster bus speed than a standard AT. While nice, this of course again poses problems as boards designed to operate properly in a true "AT" type of computer will have problems with the faster bus of the ZDS system. He said one solution they have discovered is the customer could RMA the memory board back to Everex and they would install some faster logic chips in some problem areas that in the later models of ZDS 248's would solve the problem. He did mention, however, that if you had an earlier model, you were probably out of luck!

It also seems that the RAM 1000 Everex card will not work in the Z386/16 (but then again, hardly any 3rd part card does). Seems it is looking for refresh signal on bus which Zenith did not provide.

On the plus side, he said ZDS has been the most cooperative folks he has ever worked with. If there was a problem, ZDS would get a 3-way phone conference call going with key management and engineers and Everex and they would discuss the incompatibilities found. This guy told me lots of times management would actually say to the engineers "starting right now we will make this change and not use the old circuitry anymore". Well, thus is life.

FREE ZOOM MODEM UPGRADES

I received a letter from the Zoom folks and spoke to them about it. They need your Zoom/Modem PC ST or XL, and have a very attractive trade-in offer.

During the next several weeks you can trade in your Zoom/Modem PC 1200 and receive a new internal or external 2400 bps Zoom/Mode with Sendfax in return. Trade in a Zoom/Modem PC 2400 and they'll send you a new Zoom/Modem 2400 with Sendfax **and** pay you \$30.

Sendfax is a new technology that lets their full-featured modems send a letter or other file to a fax machine **right from your PC** at 4800 baud. You can even **broadcast a fax** to a whole group of fax machines, or schedule faxes to be sent late at night, when phone rates are lowest.

What you won't get with the Zoom/Modems with Sendfax is Demon Dialing, an electronic mail buffer, touchtone decoding with touchtone password security, audio ports, a clock calendar and

A/A1 light control. But if you aren't using those extra features, this is an offer you shouldn't pass up.

Why are they making this offer? Production of the Zoom/Modem PC was temporarily discontinued, but there are system developers who have come to rely on the special features on the older model modem. They want to help out those people, and give those of you who were early supporters of Zoom's products a good deal. How does that grab you for company support?

With your HC 2400S or MX 2400S you'll receive advanced ProComm Software, one of the top-rated communications programs available. They'll also include Sendfax software to automatically convert files to facsimile format and send them as a background task, to broadcast a fax, or to schedule it for transmission when rates are lowest.

Call at 1-800-631-3116 to arrange for a product swap. Please ask for the Upgrade Department. Frank Manning, President/ ZOOM/Telephonics, Inc./ 207 South Street/ Boston, MA 02111/ (617) 423-1072

DOS 4/WINDOWS FEEDBACK

Max Burggraaf sends this feedback on some nightmares with installing DOS version 4 and Windows 3 for which we are grateful.

I also received a card from Heath - in fact, I got two! They offered MS-DOS 4.0 for \$49.00 and WINDOWS 3.0 for \$49! I got them both. In case you aren't up to date, I have the Z386/16 that I got from you with 4Mb of RAM, and I got in on that \$600 special for another 4Mb. Also, I got an offer from Plus Development that I couldn't refuse so I gave my Hardcard 40 to my son and bought a Hardcard II 80Mb drive. It is now in my machine. I have been using DOS 3.3.

The following may or may not be of interest to you or H-SCOOP readers. Use my experiences as you like.

In installing DOS 4.0 one of the alternatives was to reformat the hard drive, but the screen indicated that reformatting was optional. I was led to believe that the new system would write over or modify the files as necessary.

I had all kinds of trouble. Finally, after trying several different things, I called the local Heath/Zenith store and talked to Don Greene, the manager. (Don started in repairing TVs as a boy and worked as a Heath technician from H-8s through H-150s.) He called the factory and told them I was getting "Write fail on INT 24." Apparently, this was not a new problem to them. He also told them that I could not install WINDOWS 3.0.

Don relayed their advice: "Reformat the hard disk, install DOS 4.0, then install WINDOWS." It obviously took quite a while to backup 40 Mb of files. When that was done, I used the DOS 4.0 reformat command on the hard drive. Again, I tried to install DOS 4.0 and got other error messages. The last one told me that my disk could not be used by the program at all!

Then, I made up a DOS 4.0 system floppy and put format/s/v on it. After using that disk to format the hard drive, I went through the install program again and got that nasty message again. I then used the Hardcard II install program on the hard drive. With tongue in cheek, I took the floppy out, pushed Ctrl-Alt-Del and crossed my fingers. **The machine booted 4.0 from the Hardcard!**

Then all I had to do was restore the files. A couple of hours later I was ready to try WINDOWS again. This time it went on with little trouble. So now I have only to learn how to use the 4.0 shell and WINDOWS. Oh yes, my grandson tells me I must get a mouse. Something else to learn--and I am almost too old! I'm not sure if I want to try any more upgrades.

And still in Windows, Bill Hall, an expert on Windows (see his article in the September 11th issue of PC Magazine), called to say if Windows is installed for a Zenith machine, it should work without any problems.

Art Pease then called to share some of his experiences with Windows and his Z386/16 computer. He said to be careful to exempt the Slushware area where the BIOS is stored or you may have problems. When installing Windows for a Zenith computer, it will properly install most of it. However with the Z386/16 you must also be certain that the HIMEM.SYS in the CONFIG.SYS file has the switch **\SHADOW:ON**. This must be specified by the user and will not automatically happen when installing windows. Otherwise it may write to the BIOS area and cause a system crash.

For that machine when not using Windows, but assigning memory to EMM386.SYS, you must use the switch **X=E000-EFFF** to mark the Slushware area. Then the EMM driver which converts the extended to expanded memory will stay out of the slushware area, else it may write into it and again cause a crash or worse.

MISCELLANEOUS BITS

* SOTA Technology, Inc. has recently announced a **386 slotless 386SX upgrade accelerator with cache for 80286 computers** to convert them to 386 SX 16Mhz systems. It will allow your 286 to run 386-specific software, such as Windows 3.0 in 386 enhanced mode. The unit is the size of a credit card and plugs into your 80286 CPU socket. I have been getting calls on this unit as we are handling their upgrade accelerators for the 8088 machines.

Hold off on this one. As usual, because of Zenith's noncompatibility problems, it does not work properly in a Zenith system. SOTA is presently addressing this problem. As soon as it is ready and works, we will be stocking and selling them, and we'll let you know. For now, stay away from it.

I spoke at length to the SOTA folks and they said they are having problems with this unit in the Zenith 248 computers, especially warm boot problems. They said it's very hard to develop products that work properly for Zenith computers, and also said Zenith computers have been a major thorn in their sides since day one. Their other accelerator cards had to be modified to work with the Zenith 8088 computers.

Anyway the unit retails for \$595, we'll probably be looking at around \$400. If you're interested, let me know and I'll put your name on a list and let you know when something is available.

* Dan Jerome sends some news about some **shareware software for the PC series**. He mentions **UED.EXE which is a small (37K) ASCII editor having many features** of the big ponderous word processors, but it is quick and easy to use and supports screen colors. Features include the ability to print out from the program. It can handle extremely large files. Minor problems include does not provide line centering or automatic pagination and has no access to special printer fonts.

The other program is **COMYQM.EXE** also supports color and is a **very fast disk copying program**. It provides many options as to where it should send source data which it uses to copy to your blank destination disks. It can make either one or many copies of the same disk in one pass. First it formats the disk, then it copies and finally it verifies the data. This program comes from "On-Line-Bible" shareware, being included within it, but it is also available as a single.

UED.EXE, .DOC, UDOCFG.EXE may be obtained from Useful Software/ 340 Dale St/ Waterloo, Ontario/ CANADA N2J 3Y3. COPYQM.EXE, .DOC may be obtained from Sydex/ 153 Murphy Ave/ Sunnyvale, CA 94086/ (408) 739-4866.

"I also ran into another **neat piece of shareware**. It is called "LHARC". This is the **king of arc programs**. It enables you to archive all type of programs and gives you full control. For example, if you want to send a friend some files, you can have it combine the files up into a ball and designate this as an .EXE filename. When your friend receives the disk that has been LHARC'ed, all he has to do is to type out the filename, and all of the integral files will come tumbling out one at a time. Our you can control which files you want to unarc on a one-by-one basis. You can also view the files when they are in the arc configuration."

* Dear Henry, After reading the report on the **SOTA 386Si** in your July newsletter, I should like to tell you about its performance in my random-flight work on my 158. The initial results were disappointing; the calculations went only about 60% faster than with the 8087-2 installed. With the coprocessor, I had been doing floating point calculations using four-byte numbers. In the absence of a coprocessor, Turbo Pascal can use four-byte numbers only by software emulation. To avoid the loss of speed this would entail, I used only the six-byte numbers standard in Turbo Pascal in these tests of the accelerator board.

Installation of a 387SX on the SOTA board gave me a further increase in speed of about 4.8. The overall increase in speed relative to the performance with the 8 MHz 8088 alone is a factor of about 18-20. Of course, the 8088 was used with six-byte numbers and the 80387SX with four-byte numbers to give these results. - Prince Rouse

* Henry, Updating from H-Scoop #125, the **latest WordPerfect 5.1 interim release is 6/29/90**. Other interim 5.1 releases were 11/6/89, 1/19/90, and 3/30/90. Apparently the latest interim release fixes some problems with the spelling checker and thesaurus, and makes very significant changes in their "tutor" program. Registered users will need their license number in order to get the latest interim release, and those users should contact WordPerfect Information Services at 1-800-451-5151 to find out how to obtain this interim release, if the user thinks it is needed. All 5.1 files appear to be upgraded with a new date stamp for 6/29/90. Even the several "Readme" files included in 5.1 appear to have changed. Calls between 6 p.m. and 7 a.m. Mountain time should go to 1-801-222-9010, the after hours support number.

I use 5.1 on my trusty but old H/Z-151, to which I've added an Intel Above Board for PC/XT with 2 meg of expanded memory. I use the disk accelerator Super PC-Kwik, configured to lock 1 meg of expanded for a disk cache. The other 1 meg is "seen" by 5.1 and used for the overlay files, temporary files and so forth. Works great and is lightning-fast as 151's go!

I'm curious about what other H-SCOOP readers may be finding with respect to the ZDS MS-DOS upgrade from 3.3+ to 4.0. It looks to me as if 35K more of 640K conventional is being taken by 4.0 than was used by 3.3+. As you pointed out in H-SCOOP #125, most of the new features of 4.0 have been available in other packages for quite awhile. I'm not at all sure I can afford to consume 35K of conventional for 4.0.

Suppose we don't upgrade, and decide to stay at 3.3+ for the concerns related above. Does this mean that if we don't upgrade to 4.0, ZDS will not continue to list us on their data base, thus we will not receive further notifications of later updates? John R. Miller

Editors response: I don't know John, I haven't sent in a registration card for a long time and along comes all these update forms. I guess whenever ZDS is short of money, they will send upgrade coupons out! I don't see the need for 4.0 either, I'm already short of base RAM with 3.3, and I don't intend to go higher right now. I have all the features 4.0 provides, only in 3rd party software, which is faster and bug-free.

* **SEARS LOSES \$400 MILLION U.S. TREASURY CONTRACT.** The Bid Did Not Satisfy DMAC II Requirements. A. U.S. Treasury

Department award for up to \$400 million worth of PCs, software, and accessories was thrown out by the General Services Administration's (GSA) Board of Contract Appeals.

A panel of three judges concluded that the winning bid by Sears Business Systems Centers of Chicago did not comply with 10 mandatory requirements, out of hundreds, stated in DMAC II. The Treasury Department now has the option of awarding the contract to a runner-up, or rewriting the contract for another round of competition.

The GSA board found that a Sears-bid **Zenith Turbosport laptop computer and its AC adapter** together exceeded the 16-pound weight maximum requested for DMAC II. In addition, the cable Sears intended to use for connecting two Macintosh LANs did not provide the necessary routing, addressing, and traffic management as stipulated by DMAC II. Sears was rebuked for bidding a math coprocessor chip for the Macintosh SE without the accelerator board required to make the chip work.

* Got your new catalogue yesterday, but have not had a chance to go through it. I save that kind of reading for the daily commute, and it is now the weekend. I am looking forward to seeing what you have in store for us in the way of computers. Even more so, since I learned on Monday that **my favorite Heath Store, White Plains, NY has folded** for all time. I have been trekking over there since the store opened in 1973. I loved that place and the people in it. They were the perfect example of what one was always led to believe what Heath people were like. Those bastards at Zenith certainly succeeded in chewing up and spitting out the beautiful little company which had a sense of values that are rapidly disappearing from this world. And I used to read those articles in BUSS, "Heath in good hands with Zenith." What bull! I was skeptical then, because I know what bloodsuckers some corporations can be. I would like to see the Heath/Zenith story used as a case study in business school courses as an example of rotten management run riot. Well, enough. I got carried away. The Jericho, Long Island store was also closed. R.I.P. Cheers! Bayard Badenhausen

* I got some information about difficulties with ZENITH. Would that mean a discontinuation of ZENITH support in your house? [No!]

Myself, I am annoyed about ZENITH's strange policy in Germany for many years since they had devoured HEATH.

They lost a great number of ancient HEATHKIT users (an important potential of customers and producers of outstanding software!) because of an arrogant behavior.

The initial maintenance of a close contact between the users and HEATH was the secret of success and advantage in comparison with other manufacturers. ZENITH ignores this fact, so they will become a computer manufacturer just as usual but more expensive. Manfred Deffner/ West Germany

* I have had several reports from owners of the MinisPort computer that the included **transfer software FWL does not work**. I myself have had this experience and had to use an external 5" drive to transfer files to the MinisPort 2" floppy. Anybody have any comments on this?

* Regarding my earlier comments about the **Panasonic KX-P1180** printer, I just finished reading an evaluation on almost all of the current printers available. This article appeared in "PC Magazine," dated 14-Nov-89. To summarize, it called both the Panasonic KX-P1180 and the KX-P1124 "Editor's Choice" in their respective class (i.e., monochromatic dot matrix, 9 and 24-pin print heads, respectively). One moot point mentioned in the article was that users often have a difficult time loading paper thru the rear of the 1180 printer, which is a standard technique carried over from the "olden days." I have often been troubled by this feature. (NOTE: There never was a problem loading paper for the

1124.) The fix for this problem for the 1180 is to load paper from **THE BOTTOM**. Then the problem goes away. Ah, what freedom.....

As you know, in order to access the bottom paper port, you have to set the printer on a stand if you have your printer on a table like I do. Loading paper from the bottom is by far the easiest way. Using this technique, I have no further problems with my 1180, and to boot it has many features of the 1124, which I also have. Further, each of the two Panasonic manuals indicates that feeding paper from the bottom is the most efficient way performance-wise.

Another bit/piece you may want to add to your next H-SCOOP. About a month ago, I called **Word Perfect** and asked them to **send me a copy of all their changes**. Late yesterday, the UPS truck drove up at my house and dropped off a rather large box from Word Perfect. When I opened it I found a sheet of printed instructions and 12 new Word Perfect 5.1A (the "A" designation is mine) disks: literally a complete new set. One more disk than before. From viewing the READ.ME file on disk #1, I found that they have made changes in many files with respect to the version I received from you last January. Not only that but when I tried to make backup copies, I found that their disks had been write-protected. I have never seen such a disk: none of the 12 have a write-protect notch. However, I did try a couple of disk copying techniques. First, I tried "Copyqm.EXE.". Then I formatted 12 360k disks with P.C. Tools, and tried the disk copy program. Both of them failed. So now we are back to write-protecting disks again. (A reference to Ashton-Tate.)

But my suggestion to you, Henry, is in order to keep your WP 5.1 word processing system up to date, haul out your credit card and call Word Perfect and order ALL of the latest changes. They billed me for \$20.00, which included UPS transportation.

CLASSIFIEDS

Classified ads can be placed in this section free of charge by any H-SCOOP subscriber. Non-subscriber's ads are placed at \$10 per insertion in advance. Ads to appear more than once must be submitted separately each month publication is desired - maximum 2 months with 2 month wait. When placing ads, try to keep in mind the 'devaluation' of computers and components and adjust your price accordingly.

GIVING AWAY--H-SCOOP '81 to 124; SEXTANT #1 through #40; BUSS #14 through #159; REMark #6 through Volume 11 Issue 7; Z89-11 Multi-Function input/output card with manual, never used. These items free except for shipping and handling. They're too good to throw away! Neil E. Stone/ Rt. 4, Box 124/ Thief River Falls, MN 56701/ (218) 681-5575

FOR SALE--Zenith Z-386SX computer (16Mhz 2Meg RAM) with high speed 40meg hard disk, 2 serial ports, 1 parallel port, 101 keyboard, VGA video board. All Zenith standard with full warrantee. We are an associate ZDS dealer and selling a demo unit in new condition with all factory software, DOS 3.31, Windows, etc. Retail \$3995, last unit in stock for \$2399. Also ZVM-1492 VGA Flat screen monitor for \$575 with above computer. Air Capital Computer/ One Lewis Lane/ Mercer Island, WA 98040/ (206) 232-1717.

PEEKING/POKING

OVERKILL?

This is a short editorial on the subject of how much PC computer do you need. It is beginning to appear to me that Intel has won the battle of trying to convince the world that everybody has to

have at least a 386 class computer. And as mentioned previously in this newsletter, the main reason for the Intel "kill off the 286 and under machines" was because the CPU chips could be second sourced in the other machines and Intel could not reap all the profits. The 386 and 486 CPUs are only Intel.

Problem is, with some clever advertising, they seemed to have convinced the majority that there is no place in the world for the 286 and 8088 anymore. Those willing to believe that have obviously not been part of the 8080 and Z80 8-bit generation where 64K was the maximum memory you had. I ran my entire business with dBASE II on a 64K machine without problems.

I will say that the majority of home users of computers would probably do nicely with the 8088 computers. Many businesses would do nicely with a 286 machine. Until recently, there was not much software that would make use of the protected or enhanced mode of the 386 (like Windows 3.0 finally does).

I have been getting calls of late for computer system quotes for simple applications where the clients were convinced that they required a 386 or 486 machine for doing simple tasks. These clients have been reading reports saying the 386 and 486 are going to be the machines of the future. They are actually afraid that if they purchase a lower end machine they will be lacking some sort of compatibility, or not be able to get expansion cards, drives, etc., for their systems. Hogwash.

Unless you are doing high tech applications with your system like desktop publishing, CAD/CAM, network file servers, imaging, etc., my advice is to check out some of these lower end machines. You'll most likely get all the horsepower you require, and save perhaps several thousands of dollars in the process.

So don't let Intel tell you what you need. Based on your needs for the machine, make an intelligent decision. If anybody really does not know what they need for an application, I will be glad to discuss it with them.

TECH FORUM

KEEPING HARDWARE HEALTHY

A host of environmental factors which are easily overlooked can interfere with your customers' efficient computer operation. Smoke, dust, temperature, humidity and power problems can all affect machinery adversely, necessitating costly repair or even replacement. A few preventive tips can help your customers save time and money.

1) Hardware should be kept out of heat and humidity (above 90 degrees and 70 percent respectively) and away from liquids that conduct electricity, including water, coffee and soda. [Some day I'll tell you stories about replacing keyboards that did not like coffee, soda, etc!]

2) Hardware should have a stable power source such as a surge protector or power-line conditioner with a static guard.

3) Floppy disks should be handled with care. Avoid the exposed area of the disk, and store disks in a cool, dry place, isolated from any magnetic field such as electric motors, stereo speakers, telephones, even clasps on briefcases or purses.

4) Removable hard disks should always be stored in airtight containers when not in use.

5) If problems are experienced when first turning on the system, check all the electrical connections and make sure every installed device (printer, hard disk, modem) is turned on.

6) Hard disks should be let on as much as possible. A spinning

surface is an unlikely place for dust or smoke to settle. In addition, turning a computer on and off as few times as possible will lessen the possibility of system burn-out.

7) When planning to be away from the computer for an extended period of time, prevent damage to the video screen by turning down the brightness control on the monitor.

8) To eliminate the possibility of the disk drive head crashing on a section of the disk and damaging files, exit programs before turning the computer off.

9) Printers should be serviced at least once a year, more if an excessive amount of paper is run through them regularly.

10) If the hard disk drive has a filter over its fan, the filter should be cleaned periodically. A filter that is clogged or overloaded with dust will stop working, or worse, discharge dust into the drive.

11) No attempts should be made to vacuum or dust equipment other than the keyboard, since overzealous cleaning can easily result in damage. If the machine needs a cleaning, it should be taken to a dealer or repair shop.

[Editors note: I want to inject something here. We see plenty of computers for servicing. Some of the innards of these things are coated with dust and dirt - a very good insulator. We blow them out and you would not believe the dust, dirt, lint, hair, fuzz, etc., that comes out of these things! For those in a smoking environment (and forget about the lungs for a second), a thin coating of tar will also deposit on the insides (very bad for floppy drives and hard drives!). This also is a good insulator. Insulators prevent heat from being removed, which will mean overheated equipment. Bottom line - shortens your component life. For those capable, I recommend removing the cover of the equipment (computer, monitor, external drives, etc.) and using an air compressor to blow the dust and dirt off the unit.

Users who are cautioned to avoid these pitfalls will enjoy the benefits of a much happier, healthier computer.

Taken from the Softsell Reseller, January 1990 issue.

ASK HANK

This column is to provide technical information to our readers. If you have a question or problem feel free to write in and we will try to provide the correct answer. If any readers don't agree with the answer I have [hey, I'm far from perfect!], send in your views and we will review and print them as needed. This column will be printed as space provides.

QUESTION: Thank's for your suggestions on disks. I have been using unbranded MEI high density disks for the past year and have a pile of them on the floor now that are useless. I have not been very happy with them. I recently purchased some Verbatim HD disks, but noted that they don't have reinforced hubs. Is this commonplace nowadays? I would rather have disks that I could count on than save money and lose various material that might be very important.

ANSWER: As for the disks, the hubs are not important. They were very important with the old H89 type 96 TPI drives, and I suppose if you don't have a hard drive and use the floppy drives a lot, they won't hurt anything, but if you have a decent disk drive that grabs the disk properly with its cone, and you insert the disk properly, there should not be any problems. Like you said, which reinforced what I told you, cheap unbranded disks simply are not worth it. You said you had a pile of MEI disks on the floor that don't work. I have also experienced things like this. But worse, depending on a floppy to hold backups and/or data is serious business. It certainly doesn't help to think you have good data on

the floppy only to have it not there when you need it. Besides that, cheap disks usually do damage to the drive by clogging the heads and/or acting like an abrasive to the heads. Either of these will be cause for early service and/or replacement of the drive. We get lots of business to fix floppy drives, and one major cause is clogged heads caused by cheap disks. The moral is, it is not worth trying to save a buck by skimping.

QBBS

This column which will be printed from time to time will contain messages from our Quikdata Bulletin Board System, a TBBS system, which were left from readers and customers. When some important information is on the board and perhaps relevant answers appear, we will print them in this section.

Can anybody help out on the EaZy PC?:

From: JODY TOLLIVER

If any or all of you out there have any information regarding the eZ Pc, such as what kind of hard drive it will support (40mb, 60mb) etc., I would like to know. I have a 20 megger in now and want to upgrade to a 40, and add an external 5 1/4 floppy if possible.

From: BRIAN HANSEN

The EZPC uses an IDE style Hard drive where the controller is built into the drive and only a simple 40 pin interface is carried to and from it. I don't know if the ROM will support a 40M drive. It also has no expansion bus internally so I don't think you could add a secondary controller, but I have seen files on the ZDS Forum of Compuserve by people who have added an external drive to it. Those might also have been put here but I have never looked for them. The floppy drive cable in the EZPC is a very strange cable. It is like the Twisted style used by most IBM Clones but has an extra twist to use pin #2 for a drive select. Brian

From: JODY TOLLIVER

Thanks, Brian for the info. My machine now has a Western Digital 20m which has 46 pins in the controller board attached to the hd. Only 40 are used, however. I have been told that there is no way to put another controller in, not only because there is no room, but ROM can't handle it. I am, however going to attempt a 40mg. After all, they told me (ZDS) that I could not use the mouse port to hook up any type of modem and that is what I am using now! Jody

From: JODY TOLLIVER

I am trying to decide whether or not to upgrade the ROM on my EZPC. There is now 32k on the ROM, and I wonder if I would be able to upgrade to 64k in order to support a 40mg hard drive(yes, I'm still thinking about that) Does anyone have any ideas? Thanks.....jt

Anybody found a low cost source for the 2" diskettes?

From: FRANK ZINGHINI

Subj: MinisPort DISKS

Hi. I'm new to the board, and don't have your catalog yet. Do you stock 2" MinisPort disks, and if so at what price? Thanks! Regards ... FZ

From: BRIAN HANSEN

Henry; Got my FUJI LT-1 disks today and they are for the MinisPort. Right on the box is the label "For Zenith Data Systems' MinisPort (tm) and compatibles" and "For Data Recording (not for video recording)" I tested one tonight and found that it worked in the MinisPort Computer. I also with the external drive cable; I got from you; with an external 3.5" drive; found that most of the Disk Based Diagnostics CB-31-5 tests will work on the MinisPort. If one goes into the configuration menu and selects the XT style tests most will run. I get timer errors in the CPU test but that really didn't surprise me too much. I just completed a floppy disk test on the little 2" drive with the FUJI LT-1 and it ran 100% on errors.

The specs on the LT-1s is DSDD 245TPI, 80 tracks/side. I also made a discovery with the diagnostics and Modem Doctor that the MinisPort has two IBM Compatible serial port chips. The one is the 9 pin serial COM1 connector and I think the other is connected to the internal plug for the modem pcb, meaning that it must be just a modem that is driven by the internal comm chip probably at TTL Levels [but that is just a guess]. One nice thing about the disks is they are each sealed in a little case to protect them. I guess for \$9.50 they should be protected. My guess is that a willing dealer could sell them for less than the \$100 MSRP! If HUG only gets \$3.00 surcharge for HUG software on 2" disks then someone is making some money somewhere. Brian

High density disks on PC/XT

From: RONALD PANNATONI

Subj: AT DISKS ON Z151

I have another problem that some of your products might be able to help me solve. I need your opinion about this first, though. There is some software that I've been trying to get for over 6 months, but it is available only on AT type high density disks. It is in compressed format, too, and converting directly to XT low density format won't work because the decompression program assumes it is running off the AT format and won't work when run off XT disk (so the distributor tells me). When the files are broken out, they take up about 5 Megabytes, and the distributor won't take the trouble to copy this on to XT disks, even if I supply the disk and offer a fee for service. So I got to get the AT disks. Here's the question: using your CompatiCard and the MF504 Mitsubishi drive, can I read the AT disks on the Z151? Now that I have DOS 3.3+ and the version -18 ROM's? If so, what kind of cable is required, your CABL-S5? Will the MF504 drive run off the power supply I'm using for the outboard Siemen's drive on my H89, or internally off the 151? Thanks.

From: HENRY FALE

The CCARD2 (\$79) and a single cable CABL-S5 along with the MF504 will read and write 1.2 meg floppies on the 151. The Siemens cabinet will work, so will internal mounting if you have the space.

Software problems

From: RANDY SELZ

Subj: NORTON UTILITIES

Have you had any problems using Norton Utilities on heath 161 portables? I am having problems when I try and use the "NU" function, all the others seem to work. I keep getting a divide overflow message.

From: HENRY FALE

No, I have not heard of any problems with it, you may want to call Norton and see what they have to say.

From: ALLIE LINGO

Another note...I have found recently that the CAD/CAM course (EE-109) listed in the Heath catalog will not work with my Z159 (ZDF-1217-DY) with the video card set up for CGA and a ZVM-135 monitor. When calling up the Editor the screen would go blank and the computer would hang up. I was told by Heath Technical Consultation Department that "there appears to be some type of a combination problem between the video card and the computer's BIOS." I was told that I could return the course for a full refund. Allie C. Lingo/POB 118/Dierks, AR. 71833-0118

WANTED

From: DAVE MILLER

Subj: WANTED Z-183 MLB

Well much to my dismay my kids spilled coke in my 183 while they were using it. I have the whole machine cleaned up now and all is working. That is all but the Main Logic Board(MLB). The board smoked big time when the pop hit it while on. There is a hole burned in it the goes at least three layers deep. So here I am needing help locating a new MLB for my 183. I can get the board from Heath/ Zenith but the 1,000 dollars they want for it makes it cost prohibitive. Anyone that may have a used or refurbished 183

MLB I sure would be interested in acquiring it. If anyone knows of a 183 somewhere that has a bad display power supply etc and would be willing to part with the unit please let me know. Likewise anyone that might know where I could get refurbished boards please let me know. Thanks, Dave Miller/ Fido 1:285/26/ Opcn 200:5010/26/ BBS 1-402-292-1360/ Voice 1-402-292-2268

From: JOE PANNON

I am looking for a second serial port kit for H/Z '151 PCs that used to be carried by Heath but apparently not any longer. My only hope is that some Heath store still might have it on its shelves somewhere. So, I'd like to ask all of you making a visit to one of those stores (except in Seattle where I did it already) to ask them if they have any of those kits left over. My other option is to buy a surplus H/Z Floppy controller card (that is also the serial card) and cannibalize it for the extra port parts. Of course, the best thing would be to find one of the early cards that has both COM ports on it. If you know of such a surplus card that can be had for a nominal cost, please let me know.

From: GEORGE H. FORD

Hello Henry. I was wondering if you could help me out. I have a z110, running MSDOS 3.1. In early issues of REMark there were a series of articles on building an EEPROM board (s100) to quickly bootup the 100. I've build the board, but have run into a dilemma. One needs the programmer package for the DOS version in use to rebuild the MSDOS.sys and io.sys files with the accompanying diskettes that come with the programmers package. (I have version 2, but that does no good for DOS 3). If you have, or can track down, either a new or intact used version of the Z100 MSDOS 3.xx Programmers Package I'd be interested in acquiring it. My phone numbers are (301)969-5967 (h), (301)688-6389 (w). And, my address is: 8131 silo ct./Severn, MD 21144.

From: PAT SWAYNE

Subj: H-SCOOP

Henry, you sort of put your foot in your mouth in your latest H-SCOOP. On page 1, after stating ZDS's new prices for SupersPort 286 memory, you say "Second source vendors usually sell 1 meg RAM upgrades for about \$100!". But on page 4 of the catalog packaged with that H-SCOOP, you list the price of a 1 meg board for a SupersPort at \$279. Which vendor has them for \$100?

[I may have not made myself clear, but I was speaking of "standard" types of memory like most computer vendors use, not the specialized types of memory that only ZDS uses. However, even at that, 3rd party sources for RAM that is available for Zenith machines is usually only a small fraction of the cost as the equivalent being purchased through ZDS.]

Also, on page 5 of H-SCOOP, you printed a letter from an owner of a Z-286 who wanted to upgrade his system to a '386. In your comments following the letter, you said that you thought he had a Z-286LP. However, it is quite obvious to me that his machine is the original Z-286 (Z-248 boards in a Z-151 cabinet). The AMI and AOX boards will work in that machine.

[The key here is the smaller cabinet. The only baby AT cabinet (same size as Z151 series) 80286 system I am aware of that ZDS produced was the Z286LP which only has two expansion slots. Had it been the full sized cabinet, then I agree, it would have been the Z241 or Z248.]

If you can get from that writer or some other source more info on the Cumulus and Evergreen 386SX boards that fit in '286 sockets, I for one would be interested in that information. [Read about the Sota accelerator in the first section of this newsletter - 'soon as it works on Zenith, we'll carry it]. I would like to know exactly how much clearance above the CPU board is required. If it is not, I would like to try one in a SupersPort 286e some time. The '286 socket in that machine is on the bottom of the motherboard, and there is some clearance between the board and the plastic cabinet. Sure would be neat if all the SupersPort 286 owners had

the option of upgrading their machines to 386SX's for \$400. And who knows, maybe you could sell the board for less than that.

PROGRAMMER FOR HIRE

From: JODY TOLLIVER

Subj: DBASE III+ PROGRAMMER

I am a dBASE III+ programmer for the State of Fla. If there is anyone who needs a program modified, or a system wrote in this language, compiled or uncompiled, I would appreciate it if you would leave a msg on this BBS.

Jody L. Tolliver

Msg#: 1837 *MAIL*

08-15-90 18:07:56

From: BRIAN HANSEN

To: HENRY FALE (Rcvd)

Subj: MINISPORT BATTERY

Ok Henry when I determine the problem I will call or leave a message. With no manual [HUGBB sale] I am using data provided by fellow owners and press releases by ZDS. I understand it is a rapid charge battery that takes 3 hours to charge. I don't know if the charger is sensing a full charge too soon or if the battery is giving a false charged signal. That is if that is how it works. I am using my Motorola two-way radio knowledge of their battery chargers to base my findings on and that might be completely wrong. I have another Minisport to compare reading to coming shortly. Hope to have more information shortly. You wouldn't happen to know if it is ok to run it while connected to ac with out overcharging the battery? I have been told no more than 3 hours charge but I think that means just charging since the AC pack has a 6V run output that just passes through the small dc plug to the middle battery to computer connector. The charge pin goes to a separate battery connector that has the charging voltage on it and battery voltage when in the normal connected state. I can't figure out the small pin labeled 5V signal but think that it is the key to the puzzle. Think it is the how much charged signal but could be wrong on that. Will keep you informed as to if I need a battery. Brian

QUIKDATA BITS

We have made some good purchases on hard drives and some other items, and for the month of September only, and only to H-SCOOP subscribers we will pass these specials on to you.

ST-125 21 meg 3.5" hard drive (37ms). This is a very good drive for the Z148, Z100 and any computer. It is a fast drive and a low power drive. One year warranty. \$195 complete. If you want the entire kit with controller, cable and drive, the PCW20 is \$239

ST-251-1 42 meg half height 5" drive (28ms) for \$289. Complete kit with controller and cables \$335

Want a good low cost VGA card? Same deal, \$99 for the MAXVGA 8-bit VGA card.

I was hoping to get some of my liquidation stuff in here this month, but have been entirely too busy. I am clearing out all the rest of my Zenith stuff like Windows 2, carrying cases for the SupersPorts, PC Diagnostic disks, DOS2 Programmers utility pack, ZBASIC, GWBASIC, ZA180-39 keypad, and a bunch of H8 boards. I'll briefly list some of the stuff here. Hopefully by next month I'll have the current list on my bulletin board and print the highlights here. Meanwhile, if any of the above sounds like you may want it, call or write and we'll make a deal!

I do have lots of used but excellent condition 8" DS DD floppy disks and 5" soft sector double sided disks. Will sell the 8" for \$0.40 each and the 5" for \$0.25 each. Also have lots of UHR11 1.2 meg 5" disks for \$0.25 each. Majority are name brand disks, many used only for backup use.

For the H8 I have two H8 boxes with front panel board and power supply, two H8 org-0 boards, 7 H8-16 16K static ram boards, 1 Trionyx Z80 CPU board, 2 H8-4 four port serial I/O boards, 2 H17 controller boards, 2 8080 CPU boards, 2 8K static RAM boards, 1 Trionyx 64K RAM board for Z80 CPU.

For the laptops I have lots of extra battery packs and chargers, keypads, etc. Have many ZA180-56 24 WHr packs, ZA180-57 26WHr packs, ZA180-72 30WHr packs, ZA180-65 48WHr packs. For the TurbosPort I have lots of 3034-HC 53WHr packs. Have a bunch of ZA180-73 cables, which is the internal cable required on the SupersPort models to bring the bus to the rear for the expansion chassis.

Have one not working ZVM123 green screen composite monitor. CRT is good, horizontal seems to be out. Probably good for most parts. \$15 for this which includes UPS shipping. Just want to get rid of it.

If you need any of this stuff, call.

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Be sure to visit our bulletin board for latest prices and updates, new products, liquidation items, news items, and a place to leave and receive messages, info for H-SCOOP, etc.

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